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Washington Closure Hanford demolishes Hanford fuel development facility

Washington Closure Hanford continues to make substantial cleanup progress in the 300 Area, the center of Hanford's nuclear research and reactor fuel fabrication activities during World War II and the Cold War.

Work crews recently completed above grade demolition of the 308 Building, a two-story, 71,000-square-foot structure built in 1960 for the development of reactor fuel, including the testing of fuel irradiated to produce plutonium. The building, originally called the Plutonium Fabrication Pilot Plant and later the Fuels Development Laboratory, also was used to prepare and test fuel for Hanford's Fast Flux Test Facility.

"This is another major step toward cleaning up the U.S. Department of Energy's largest environmental cleanup closure site," said Gary Snow, director of Washington Closure's D4 (Deactivation, Decontamination, Decommissioning, and Demolition) organization. "Our dedicated workforce put in a tremendous amount of effort to stabilize the building, allowing us to safely complete demolition and stay on track to meet DOE's 2015 Vision."

To prepare the 308 Building for demolition, Washington Closure in 2010 removed 52 enclosed research units, or glove boxes. The glove boxes allowed workers to look through windows and reach into transfer ports with attached gloves in order to handle radioactive materials.

The 308 Building also featured a high-bay referred to as the 308A Building. Constructed in 1971, the 308A Building housed the Training, Research, Isotopes, General Atomics (TRIGA) test reactor, used to perform neutron radiography quality testing of fuel elements and fuel components.

Washington Closure demolished the 308A Building in 2011 and is making preparations to remove the TRIGA reactor this fall. The 250-ton reactor will be packaged and transported to the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility (ERDF) in central Hanford.

Washington Closure also is preparing to remove the 350-ton Plutonium Recycle Test Reactor, which was housed under the iconic 309 Dome until the 80-foot-tall containment



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structure was lifted in January 2011. The reactor, which supported the development of fuels for the nuclear power industry, also will be shipped to ERDF.

Washington Closure, a limited liability company owned by URS, Bechtel and CH2M Hill, manages the \$2.3 billion River Corridor Closure Project for the U.S. Department of Energy's Richland Operations Office. The company is responsible for cleaning up 555 waste sites, demolishing 329 contaminated buildings, placing two plutonium production reactors and one nuclear facility in interim safe storage, and operating Hanford's Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility.

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